

floor to truly bring ideas together, to give our children a better chance, to get a top-notch, first-rate education in our public schools in this country.

I encourage this body to look at these amendments on testing and not support the Hoekstra-Frank amendment; to look at the amendment, the DeMint amendment on straight A's, that would take money to the governors and bureaucracy at the State level, and let us keep the way we deliver the money to the kids and the classrooms. I urge bipartisan support for this bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) will control time on the majority side.

There was no objection.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BALLENGER), a distinguished member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I would also like to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) for all their hard work. Their leadership and willingness to work in cooperation is to be commended.

When I look at H.R. 1, I see a bill which will truly reform the way Federal dollars are spent on education. This legislation puts the decision-making in the hands of local teachers and parents, not Washington bureaucrats.

Often, we in Congress let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Does this bill have everything we conservatives want? No. Does this bill have everything liberals want? No. Does H.R. 1 have concrete reforms which will give States and local schools the resources they need to better educate our youth? Absolutely.

H.R. 1 is the President's plan. It allows for local flexibility with greater accountability. It also provides a safety valve for children trapped in failing schools by providing immediate public school choice. We should also note that public school choice would be the option after just 1 year in a failing school and not 3 years, as originally proposed.

Now, I know many of my colleagues on this side of the aisle believe H.R. 1 does not live up to the President's plan. I understand that private school choice is an issue which is a sticking point, and I also support private school choice. However, I ask that we look at the reforms this bill does provide and not what it does not. Do not throw the baby out with the bathwater.

H.R. 1 allows public school choice. It allows children in failing schools to obtain tutoring by private or religiously-affiliated educators. It allows local schools to transfer up to 50 percent of their Federal funding to programs that they believe are best for their needs. These are major reforms which cannot be overlooked. These are the most

sweeping changes in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act since its enactment, and we cannot forget this.

Also, just a few minutes ago, the Assistant Secretary told me that my conservative friends should remember that the management of the Department has changed, and their ideas will have some influence there.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA).

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise in support of this extremely important bill. Nothing we do in the 107th Congress will be more significant than this reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended.

First, I want to recognize the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) and the ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) for their outstanding leadership in crafting a bipartisan committee bill. I also commend the Members who worked on the committee negotiating groups for their efforts. We have accomplished much with our committee, but much more work needs to be done.

While I am in agreement with the core bill approach, I have grave policy concerns and I continue to believe that our children and the teachers deserve more fiscal resources than are authorized in H.R. 1. High stakes testing is going to hurt limited English proficient children the most. NAEP, or the National Assessment for Education Progress, does not include migrant students in their national sample, and the administration intends to use NAEP as a barometer to show how students are doing. Limited English proficient children should be assessed in a language they understand.

We should provide positive alternatives for the students in the gifted and talented programs as well as advanced placement for the college bound. Let us increase our investment in our country's K-16 students.

Our Nation needs 50,000 bilingual teachers to keep up with the demand, and this bill does not provide anywhere near the resources to meet this crisis. Look at the 2000 Census results and you will see the Latino population growth of 60 percent or more during the last decade. We need more funds to get the job done.

Title III consolidates bilingual education, immigrant education, and foreign language assistance programs and delegates these functions and funds to the States. The bill changes from a well-respected competitive grant to a poorly-funded formula grant program that at present does not count all the eligible population. The elimination of the National Bilingual Clearinghouse makes no sense fiscally or policy-wise.

H.R. 1 does not provide adequate funds nor strong policy support for dropout prevention. I remind my colleagues that already Hispanics

suffer from the Nation's highest dropout rate. These students will certainly be neglected and left behind.

Education Committee conferees are urged to protect and save the clearinghouse for all States to utilize the wealth of information such as exemplary programs to serve all eligible students.

Even if title 3 were funded at the maximum level authorized by the committee, we would only reach one-fourth of the children.

We hope that our colleagues in the other Chamber can help us reach the 5 million children seeking our support.

The most egregious provision found both within title 1 and title 3 singles out the parents of limited-English-proficient children and treats them differently from all other parents.

Even if a child is deemed to need special language services under the act, the school may put them in English-only programs without bothering to inform the parents. However, if a parent wants their child in a bilingual program the school must receive parental permission to include the children.

Let us fix this bill so that only those who mistreat our children are left behind.

I am urging my colleagues to vote for H.R. 1 because the core bill is there and because I think we can improve it with the help of our colleagues in the other body.

I am also urging our President as well as the Secretary of Education to support us as we try to improve the bill so that children all over this country may truly benefit. This is the time for leadership and substance over rhetoric.

I have tried to be bipartisan in my approach; however, if vouchers and block grants are added to our core bill on the floor, then I would be forced to urge my colleagues to reject this bill.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I am including for the RECORD a copy of a letter from the National Education Association in support of my remarks.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, May 16, 2001.

Representative RUBÉN HINOJOSA,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE HINOJOSA: On behalf of the National Education Association's (NEA) 2.6 million members, we would like to thank you for your efforts to address the issue of parental consent for participation in bilingual education programs. Specifically, NEA agrees with your opposition to requirements for written parental consent for the provision of non-English education services to limited-English-proficient students.

NEA strongly supports the provision of information to parents and efforts to increase parental involvement in their children's education. However, we oppose parental opt-in requirements, such as those contained in the No Child Left Behind Act (H.R. 1). We believe the proposed opt-in requirements will create unnecessary roadblocks to providing students with needed instructional services. Such requirements would result in increased bureaucracy, while intruding on local school districts' ability to tailor educational programs to serve the needs of their limited-English-proficient students. In addition, students could be placed in educational limbo while schools seek the necessary consent.

Thank you again for your leadership in addressing this important issue.

Sincerely,
MARY ELIZABETH TEASLEY,
Director of Government Relations.